

The Bissell House
Suffield, Connecticut

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Connecticut

Historic American Buildings Survey
Harold H. Davis, District Officer
29 Whitney Ave., New Haven, Conn.

THE BISSELL HOUSE

Suffield, Hartford County, Connecticut

Owner: Mrs. Annie H. Cavanaugh

Date of Erection: 1815

Architect: Not Known

Builder: Not Known

Number of Stories: Two and One-half

Materials of Construction: Stone foundation
Frame house clapboarded
Shingled roof
Brick chimneys

Other Existing Records: White Pine Series - Vol. VII No. 6

List of Photographs:

1. West Elevation (Front)
2. Entrance Detail
3. Detail - Southwest Room - 1st Floor

THE BISSELL HOUSE

Suffield, Hartford County, Connecticut

Suffield, Connecticut, might well be called the Connecticut town with the Massachusetts architecture. It is easily understandable when one thinks how long this township belonged to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and that most of its settlers came from Ipswich, Newbury, etc.

The town is well dotted with old houses of distinction, one of which is the Bissell house. Although not as old as many in Suffield, nevertheless, it is entitled its place in this survey to show the particular architecture which was attempted at this time.

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The house bears a date of 1815 which is only an approximate. We are inclined to believe this, however, for a deed dated 1815 to Harvey Bissell for this land makes no mention of this house, and being that he married on January 23, 1816, we assume that the house was built for his bride. It shows the use of palladium windows which were just becoming popular. It has rusticated quoins, and in earlier times had a large front porch. This porch alone caused the comparisons to be made between the Burbank house and this one, both being of the same town, but the Burbank being eighty years earlier. The builder of the Burbank house figuring the advantage of a porch, sought double advantage by putting a second floor porch above the lower one and thereby created a structure the appearance of which wasn't too pleasant from the street. The Bissell house no longer has its porch, but still retains the original features on the interior. It is well preserved and makes an interesting study among the better old houses in Suffield.

Harvey Bissell, the builder, was one of the first Bissells known to Suffield, having come from Windsor, Connecticut, where the name was one of prominence. The Bissells are believed to have been of Huguenot stock. John Bissell, the progenitor of the family in America, came from County Somerset, England, and landed in Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1628. He became one of the settlers of Windsor. In 1648-49 he received a grant from the Connecticut Colony to run a ferry across the Connecticut River.

THE BISSELL HOUSE

Suffield, Hartford County, Connecticut

Harvey Bissell is remembered as a very successful store keeper of Suffield and the Bissell family has since been regarded as one of prominence in Suffield. Harvey Bissell married Arabella Leavitt whose family name seems equally as important in the annals of this town.

The present owner is Mrs. Annie H. Cavanaugh who is being very successful in keeping this house on its proper plane of prestige.

Sources of information: White Pine Series - Vol. VII No. 6
Genealogies of Old Windsor.
Conversation with Residents.

Author: John F. Flanagan

Approved: Harold N. Davis

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